

above a predetermined pressure being placed on the pressure pad by the patient;  
applying pressure above said predetermined pressure to the pressure pad;  
removing said pressure above said predetermined pressure;  
arming the pressure pad when said pressure above said predetermined pressure  
is on the pressure pad whereby the pressure pad serves as a sensor;  
activating an alarm when the pressure above said predetermined pressure has been  
on the pressure pad for a predetermined time and is removed from the armed pressure  
pad;  
preventing at least one of said step of arming the pressure pad and said step of  
activating an alarm when at least one of said step of applying pressure above said  
predetermined pressure and said step of removing said pressure above said  
predetermined pressure are separated in time by more than a preset period of time; and  
disposing of the pressure pad when the patient no longer has use of the pressure  
pad without permitting use by another patient.

17. (twice amended) A pressure pad comprising:  
a gel cushion;  
an alarm system having a pressure switch and an alarm;  
said pressure switch being in communication with said gel cushion, whereby  
pressure on the gel cushion results in pressure on the pressure switch;  
said alarm being connected to said pressure switch to be controlled thereby;  
the alarm system being armed upon pressure being placed on the pressure pad and

activated upon a release of the pressure; and

means for preventing at least one of the arming the alarm system and the activating of said alarm when the placing pressure more than a predetermined pressure and the release of said pressure are separated in time by more than a preset period of time.

22. (amended) A method according to claim 2 wherein the step of placing a second sensor in juxtaposition with the first sensor includes the substep of placing a photoelectric sensor in a position to be activated when the patient attempts to leave a location.

23. (amended) A method of monitoring a patient, comprising the steps of:

- placing a pressure pad that is encased in a cover on a resting place for the patient;
- energizing the pressure pad, whereby a signal is provided responsive to pressure above a predetermined pressure being placed on the pressure pad by the patient;
- applying pressure above said predetermined pressure to the pressure pad;
- arming the pressure pad when said pressure above said predetermined pressure is on the pressure pad whereby the pressure pad serves as a sensor;
- activating an alarm when the pressure above said predetermined pressure has been on the pressure pad for a predetermined time and is removed from the armed pressure pad after said predetermined time; and
- disposing of the pressure pad when the patient no longer has use of the pressure pad without permitting use by another patient;

wherein the pressure pad is a first sensor and a second sensor is placed in

juxtaposition with the patient so that when the patient assumes a dangerous position as indicated by the second sensor an alarm signal is given, a monitoring station is activated when the alarm signal is provided, and a voice message is announced near the patient wherein the step of placing said second sensor in juxtaposition with the first sensor includes the substep of detecting the direction of motion of the patient.

24. (amended) A method of monitoring a patient, comprising the steps of:

- placing a pressure pad that is encased in a cover on a resting place for the patient;
- energizing the pressure pad, whereby a signal is provided responsive to pressure above a predetermined pressure being placed on the pressure pad by the patient;
- applying pressure above said predetermined pressure to the pressure pad;
- arming the pressure pad when said pressure above said predetermined pressure is on the pressure pad whereby the pressure pad serves as a sensor;
- activating an alarm when the pressure above said predetermined pressure has been on the pressure pad for a predetermined time and is removed from the armed pressure pad after said predetermined time wherein an alarm is provided to a caretaker; and
- disposing of the pressure pad when the patient no longer has use of the pressure pad without permitting use by another patient;

the step of activating the alarm when the pressure above the predetermined pressure is removed from the armed pressure pad after said predetermined time comprising the substeps of generating a signal upon arming of said pressure pad, transmitting said signal through a first path to a microprocessor wherein a flag is set in said

microprocessor; transmitting said signal in a second path, delaying said signal in said second path in a delay line external to said microprocessor; applying said delayed signal from said second path to said microprocessor wherein said flag is removed; transmitting said alarm if said pressure above the predetermined pressure is removed from said pressure pad while said flag is present.

25. (amended) A method of monitoring a patient, comprising the steps of:

- placing a pressure pad that is encased in a cover on a resting place for the patient;
- energizing the pressure pad, whereby a signal is provided responsive to pressure above a predetermined pressure being placed on the pressure pad by the patient;
- applying pressure above said predetermined pressure to the pressure pad;
- arming the pressure pad when said pressure above said predetermined pressure is on the pressure pad whereby the pressure pad serves as a sensor;
- activating an alarm when the pressure above said predetermined pressure has been on the pressure pad for a predetermined time and is removed from the armed pressure pad after said predetermined time wherein an alarm is provided to a caretaker; and
- disposing of the pressure pad when the patient no longer has use of the pressure pad without permitting use by another patient;

the step of activating the alarm when the pressure above the predetermined pressure is removed from the armed pressure pad after said predetermined time comprising the substeps of causing a program in a microprocessor to set a flag upon arming of said pressure pad, causing said program to determine when said predetermined

time has elapsed from the setting of said flag and transmitting said alarm if said pressure above said predetermined pressure is removed after said predetermined time.

27. (amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 11 further including a second sensor wherein the second sensor is a photoelectric sensor located in a position to be activated when the patient attempts to leave a location.

28. (amended) Apparatus for monitoring a patient, comprising:  
a pressure pad for providing a signal indicating a pressure condition;  
a control housing connected to and located adjacent to the pressure pad and responsive to the signal;  
a casing at least partly encasing the control housing and the pressure pad; and  
a second sensor wherein means in the control housing responsive to said signal includes means responsive to a first sensor and the second sensor for detecting the direction of motion of the patient.

29. (amended) Apparatus for monitoring a patient, comprising:  
a pressure pad for providing a signal indicating a pressure condition;  
a control housing connected to and located adjacent to the pressure pad and responsive to the signal;  
a casing at least partly encasing the control housing and the pressure pad;  
an alarm means at least partly within the casing; and

control means within the control housing for activating an alarm when a pressure above a predetermined pressure is removed from an armed pressure pad;

said control means comprising means for generating a signal upon arming of said pressure pad, a microprocessor, means for transmitting said signal through a first path to said microprocessor wherein a flag is set in said microprocessor; means for transmitting said signal in a second path, means for delaying said signal in said second path in a delay line external to said microprocessor; and means for applying said delayed signal from said second path to said microprocessor wherein said flag is removed; transmitting an alarm if said pressure above the predetermined pressure is removed from said pressure pad while said flag is present.

30. (amended) Apparatus for monitoring a patient, comprising:

a pressure pad for providing a signal indicating a pressure condition;

a control housing connected to and located adjacent to the pressure pad and responsive to the signal;

a casing at least partly encasing the control housing and the pressure pad; and

a second sensor wherein means in the control housing responsive to said signal includes means responsive to a first sensor and the second sensor for detecting the direction of motion of the patient.

31. (amended) A pressure pad comprising:

a gel cushion;

an alarm system having a pressure switch and an alarm;  
said pressure switch being in communication with said gel cushion, whereby pressure on the gel cushion results in pressure on the pressure switch;  
said alarm being connected to said pressure switch to be controlled thereby;  
the alarm system being armed upon pressure being placed on the pressure pad and activated upon a release of the pressure if said pressure is removed longer than a predetermined time after the alarm is activated; and  
at least one tubular member communicating with gel within the gel cushion and with said pressure switch wherein force on the gel cushion results in force transmitted through the tubular member to the pressure switch.